

From: ssl@tiac.net@inetgw
To: Microsoft ATR
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Subject: Microsoft Settlement

I oppose the settlement. I've been in the personal computer market since the beginning; first as a consumer, later as a developer and independent contractor.

A few points:

- It is an outright lie that Internet Explorer ("MSIE") can't, as a matter of principle, be removed from Windows. It does not take a software expert to appreciate this: consider only that MSIE also runs on the Macintosh. Or, remember that MSIE is derived from a browser originally developed by Spyglass. Or, that MSIE was a separate product for Windows until Windows95. Of course it is possible to construct MSIE and Windows such that removing the former will break the latter, but that's no different than using glue instead of a nut & bolt to hold a pair of items together.

- Microsoft is NOT an innovator. They have invented almost nothing, and purchased or copied nearly everything. If Microsoft's behavior had been even a little less rapacious, the following outcome would have been likely:

- * more competition, since companies (and investors) would not avoid markets that Microsoft targets
- * higher growth in the computer industry
- * more innovation
- * lower prices

- Microsoft has lowered the market price of some high-end items, though vigorous non-Microsoft competition is likely to have achieved the same result.

- Microsoft has RAISED the price of their monopoly items, e.g. look at the relative cost of Windows and Microsoft Office vs. PC hardware.

- Microsoft's products are, in general, poorly designed and have many serious bugs. Open competition would have yielded higher quality products, ultimately leading to higher productivity and therefore a higher standard of living. Again, this point is easy for those who are not software experts to understand. Just consider how much time they and colleagues waste due to software crashes, features that are difficult to use or don't accomplish the expected result, etc.

- Review the Findings of Fact. It is clear that Microsoft has not, in general, been willing to compete on the basis of offering better products and services. Instead, it's just been ruthless.

An essential component of the free market is the rule of law. Microsoft's lawless behavior has harmed consumers by reducing innovation, lowering overall product quality, raising overall prices, and ultimately reducing national productivity.

Microsoft's behavior was not reigned in by past settlements, and they remain unrepentant about the clear violations listed in the Findings of Fact. The current settlement appears to be both token and toothless, and will have very little affect.

